

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

~~Please replace~~ the paragraph beginning at page 33, line 16, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Now, registration information will be described using FIG. 8. The registration information in FIG. 8 has settlement Ids and signatures added thereto, in addition to the information of the user registration database, and only information of the same settlement group is included therein. The settlement ID represents and ID in the user registration database (such as bank account numbers and credit card numbers) of the user, which an account charging portion 19 and the banking portion 20 use when performing settlement. Generation of signatures will be described later.—

~~Please replace~~ the paragraph beginning at page 107, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--FIG. 54 explains operations of benefit distribution processing of the electronic distribution service center 1. The background data managing portion 15 retains and manages the accounting information, and the handling policy and the price information as required, which have been sent from the user managing portion 18. The benefit distributing portion 16 calculates the benefit of each of the content provider 2, the service provider 3 and the electronic distribution service center 1 from the accounting information, and the handling policy and the price information as required, which have been sent from the background data managing portion 15, and sends results thereof to the service provider managing portion 11, the content provider managing portion 12 and the banking portion 20. The banking portion 20 communicates with a bank and the like to perform settlement. The service provider managing portion 11 sends to the

A2 service provider 3 the distribution information received from the benefit distribution portion 16.

Cncld. The content provider managing portion 12 sends to the content provider 2 the distribution information received from the benefit distributing portion 16.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 154, line 4, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Furthermore, in the rules 4 and 5, the earnings of the service provider 3 are smaller than those of the rule 1 because the user apparatus perform distribution operations of the service provider 2 as a proxy, and collection of paid money is performed by the electronic distribution service center 1.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 189, line 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In Step S558, the home server 51 sends to the non-group apparatus the content key encrypted with the save key K_{save} generated in S557, and the contents, the handling policy and the price information read from the large capacity storing portion 68. In Step S559, the non-group apparatus stores in the recording medium contents received from the home server 51.--
